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Buddhist temple in the district. Outside the temple gates there is a small village which takes its name, Kuan Yin T'ang, from the temple itself, and across the open space beyond the gate there is a large stage with dressing rooms for the performance of theatricals. The performances given here are watched by the crowd assembled in this market square, and are free, as an inducement to visitors to come to the temple festival. Almost every temple of any size has such a stage with an open air auditorium.

Attracted in part by the chance to see a play free, very great crowds attend this festival of Kuan Yin. From early in the morning the road from the city is densely crowded with holiday makers who can refresh themselves, as they walk the four miles to the temple, with fruit and cakes sold by numerous hawkers along the roadside. At the temple village the scene is one of great activity. The usual restaurants and teahouses, which on ordinary days do a small business with travellers, are packed to overflowing, the street encumbered with stalls selling food, incense sticks, and children's toys. In the gate of the temple itself the monks are fully occupied selling incense sticks, charms and paper "spirit" money to burn at the shrines. To the greater part of the crowd the occasion is just a holiday, or an opportunity to do business, and see the play. Particularly is this so for the men, for though many go into the temple to see the scene, very few worship.

On the other hand most of the women have come primarily for the religious aspect of the day, and it is they who buy the incense sticks and the spirit money. Before every shrine in the temple precincts a large fire of incense sticks is kept burning by the offerings of these faithful worshippers, who visit each in turn. The act of worship is in each case the same. The devotees *k'e t'ou* before the shrine, throw a cash or two on to the embroidered cloth spread

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scrap of food. It is very bad manners to leave even a grain of rice in the bowl. The other guests then attempt to put more food in his bowl, but this is only pantomime, and he immediately leaves the table. In fact everyone, as he finishes, at once gets up, for the Min Chia idea of politeness on this point is the exact contrary of our own. For the guest who has finished to linger at the table would suggest to them that he regretted having stopped eating.

Tea and cigarettes are then served to the guests in the adjoining room, and some of the older men usually smoke opium, but in about a quarter of an hour the guests take their leave, for no one is expected to make much conversation after the feast, and many would not be capable of it. The Min Chia never drink wine at other times, for them wine is part of a feast, only to be taken with food, but essential at a party. Drunkenness is thus rare. People drink at a feast until they are more than a little intoxicated, but thereafter they go straight home and sleep, so that a drunken man in the street is an unknown sight. Moreover, only a minority take wine in excess. The most part of the guests drink until they are merry, but in no sense drunk, and the quantity of food eaten at the same time also prevents rapid intoxication. Opium smokers very rarely drink. It is almost an invariable rule to find that those who drink much do not smoke opium, and that those who do, hardly drink more than one cup of wine. I only came to know one man who both smoked opium regularly and also drank heavily, and he was generally regarded as a loose liver.

Apart from feasting there is very little entertainment available for the Min Chia of the well-to-do class. There is an occasional play given at one of the guild houses, or at a theatre in the town, but this is a rare occurrence. The Guild Houses, being the associations of Chinese merchants, are private, and the entertainments there are given only at

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the annual or bi-annual festival of some patron deity. In such cases the play is given on a raised stage at the end of the courtyard, and the guests usually feast first, or during the plays, several being given in succession from about two in the afternoon until nearly midnight. Guests who are not members of the Guild can be invited, and these occasions are often used for gambling, Poker and Ma Chang being the favourite games. Poker has been introduced from Europe, as its Chinese name "*Pa sze*" from the English word "Pass" reveals.

The Min Chia are also fond of gambling, card games being the favorite with adults, and dice with children. Boys throw dice for minute sums of money, the "cash" which is still in use in the countryside, usually gathering in some convenient large gateway with smooth stone steps for this sport. The parents do not seem to consider that this game is unsuitable for children. Adults usually invite guests for cards or Ma Chang early in the afternoon; the play then continues until evening, when the feast is served which ends the entertainment. Stakes are rather high, from one dollar silver to five dollars silver a point, and it is admitted that sometimes men are ruined through gambling losses. Card games or Ma Chang are never played "for love". To the Min Chia the latter game is especially a gambler's game, and indeed in China generally this game has the reputation associated with Baccarat or Chemin de Fer in Europe. Gambling as a form of entertainment is popular not so much for itself, as because there is nothing else to take its place. For the wealthy man who has leisure life in a small town such as Ta Li is dull. The comforts of home life are not sufficient to encourage reading as a pleasure, and there is little to do if he goes out in search of distraction. Card games are always popular in such communities, in all parts of the world, but it is unfortunate, in view of the narrow